

The Llanidloes Urban District Council.

Mr Mayor and Gentlemen,

I beg to present my Annual Report of the health of the Borough for 1925.

Estimated population.	Calculating Birth and death rate.	3867.
Births.. Male.	25.	Female 20
Deaths.. Male	36	" 24
Decrease of population		17
Birth rate per 1000 of population		15.11.
Death rate do		15.51.
Deaths of infants under 1 year		1
Deaths under 1 year per 100 of population.		25.

The death rate and also the birth rate must be considered unsatisfactory. Our death rate has arisen from 14.48 during the previous year to 15.51 for the past year and our birth rate has decreased from 15.05 three previous year to 11.11 for the past year. Both the death rate and birth rate compare unfavourably with the general birth and death rate of the whole of England and Wales. The general birth rate for England was 10.4 and the general death rate for England was 12.2. So that the Borough death rate is considerably above and the Borough birth rate considerably below the general English rates which facts cannot be considered satisfactory. In defence of the high death rate it is only right I should point out to you that the death rate for that year be called an old death rate as the 60 deaths included 37 deaths of persons over 65 years of age.

The general death rate was composed as follows:-

	males	females	
Influenza..	male 1.	female 1	total 2 as against 2 in 1924.
Pulmonary T			
Tuberculosis	4	0	4 2
Cancer	3	4	7 6
Diabetes	1	0	1 2
Cerebral			
Hemiplegia	3	3	6 4
Heart Disease	3	3	11 9
Bronchitis	4	5	9 5
Pneumonia	3	0	3 0
Other respiratory diseases	0	1	1 0
Enteritis	1	0	1 0
Appendicitis	0	1	1 1
Cirrhosis of Liver	1	0	1 0
Acute & Chronic Nephritis	1	2	3 2
Other defined diseases	6	4	10 20

From the above figures it will be seen that heart disease again heads the death rate table causing 11 of the total deaths. The next two diseases causing the most deaths was cancer and bronchitis 9 deaths occurring from Bronchitis and 7 deaths from Cancer. It will be noticed that deaths from cancer have gradually increased

during the past few years. An unsatisfactory feature of the general death rate table is the number of deaths from Tuberculosis of the Lungs. Whereas during the pervious year we only had one death from this disease during the past year 4 deaths occurred from Pulmonary Tuberculosis. The remainder of the general death rate table does not call for any special comment, and may be considered average. Other than Pulmonary Tuberculosis no death occurred from any Zymotic or Infectious disease. During the year 8 deaths occurred in the Launceston Union the average age of persons dying in the Institution being 63. Five deaths occurred in the Launceston Hospital during the year two of whom were non-resident. The oldest death during the year was 87 & the youngest death 5 months.

Deaths at different age periods.

Under 1 year.	1.		
1 and under 2	0		
2 5	1		
5 25	0		
25 65	21		
65 and upwards	37	----	60'

Infectious disease notification.

The Infectious Disease statistics for the year were most unsatisfactory. During the year I received the extraordinary large number of 41 notifications of infectious diseases. They were as follows:--

Pulmonary tuberculosis	2	as against	3	in 1924.
Tubercular disease of hip.	1		0	
Scarlet fever	8		0	
Diphtheria	2		0	
Pneumonia	25		5	
Erysipelas	3		1	

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The striking feature of the infectious disease table is the very large number of cases of Pneumonia 25 notifications of this disease being received. This disease was not confined to one epidemic but was equally distributed throughout each quarter of the year. It is difficult to explain the reason of the frequency of this disease throughout the whole year. Scarlet Fever occurred during the last quarter of the year. The first batch of cases occurred in children at the Union who were attending the Council school but no cause could be traced. They were strictly isolated and the epidemic stopped. The second batch of cases were traced as having been imposed. All made excellent recovery. The two diphtheria cases occurred during the first quarter of the year both were treated with Anti Diphtheria Serum and made excellent recovery. It is satisfactory to note there was a slight decrease

in the number of notifications from Pulmonary Tuberculosis only two being received as against 3 the previous year. The case of tuberculosis hip joint disease is now in a Cot at Sir Wm Treloar's Hospital for Cripple children. Three cases of erysipelas were notified as against one in the previous year but all mild cases. Funigation by formalin was carried out every case of infectious disease.

INFANTIL MORTALITY.

The Borough infantile death rate that is deaths of infants under one year was quite satisfactory. One infant only died under one year of age and the infantile death rate per 1000 births was 23. It is satisfactory to note that there were no illegitimate births for the year all the 43 births being legitimate. The cause of the infantile death was gastric enteritis age 5 months.

INFANT WELFARE.

Excellent work has again been done at the Infant Welfare Centre & the interest taken in this excellent institution is proved by the increased attendance. The average attendance has increased to 22 as against 19. This is partly due to taking the suggestion of the Inspector from the Ministry of Health who wished all children under 5 years of age to be weighed occasionally. Dr Gibson has held the usual monthly clinic. Miss Burnside expressed herself thoroughly satisfied with the work done and Miss Henderson - Health Visitor of the district - gives instruction to the Mothers at the monthly meetings of the Clinic. Excellent work has been done during the year by the Welfare Nurse - Nurse Luckes whose services are highly appreciated. During the year she attended

Maternity cases	39.	General visits	4374
Maternity visits	706	Ante natal visits	96
Health visits	1265	making a grand total of 2482 visits	
--- excellent work.			

Equally good work has been done by the Northey Nurse Nurse Knowles. During the year she attended Medical cases 55: Surgical cases 51: Midwifery cases 3: Last offices 14: School inspection with Dr 7 the like (self) 8 operations 7 night duty 5: Total number of cases 99: total number of visits 2751. Also an excellent work.

AMBULANCE.

Excellent work has again been done during the year by the members of the St Johns Ambulance and Red Cross Society. During the year 90 patients were carried by the Ambulance and the distance covered was 3951 miles. All the work is done gratuitously and cheerfully. The work carried out by the Ambulance covers 35 parishes. The journey with the ambulance frequently necessitates the man leaving their work at very short notice and the best thanks of all concerned is due to the employers for allowing these men to leave their work for this purposes and I am sure you will endorse my remarks when I say our very best thanks is due to the members of the Association who are always so willingly and cheerfully prepared to devote their energies to the cause of suffering humanity. The members of the Association have also willingly offered their services on several occasions when extra male nursing has been required in violent cases at the Hospital.

VACCINATION.

The vaccination statistics for the year are again most unsatisfactory and are yearly going from bad to worse. Of the 43 children born in the town during the year so called conscientious objections were received giving the rate of unvaccinated children for the year of 75 per cent. If the increasing apathy towards

vaccination continues in a very few years vaccination will become extinct. I am afraid there is only one thing, unless vaccination again becomes compulsory that will bring home to the people the value of vaccination and there is a very serious outbreak of this loathsome disease-then they will rush to be vaccinated but it will be too late.

SANITARY WORK AND PROGRESS IN THE DISTRICT.

A considerable amount of practical work was carried out during the year.

RECONSTRUCTION AND TESTING OFF DRAINS. The whole of the drains at a house in Castle Street were tested and reconstructed. Drains at a Bungalow at Ridgegrove were tested and found satisfactory. The whole of the drains of the Council new houses were tested before occupation as well as drains of new villa type houses in Tamar Terrace, Pages Cross site, Dunheved Road. The drains of the Ministers houses in Tamar Terrace were also tested. Also the drains of a cottage at Chapel where a gulley has been erected to carry off slop water. Drains at St Mary's schools were also inspected.

NUISANCES ABATED. Several nuisances were abated as the result of reports received from the Inspector under the Factory and Workshop Act. A Sanitary Convenience was erected at Messrs Bartlett Bayliss & Co premises. Several lime washing notices were served. Walls reported not in a cleanly state in a workshop in High Street were remedied and an offensive sanitary convenience at a workshop at Town Mills was removed.


PUBLIC LAVATORY. A new Public Convenience was erected during the year in the Old Sheep Market.

NEW BUILDINGS. During the year the 10 new houses at Trelawny Cottages were completed. Six houses of the Terrace type were completed at the Pages Cross Site. Four houses of the Terrace type at Overtown Terrace were completed and also 4 Villa type houses in Tamar Terrace and 2 Villa type houses in Dunheved Road.

SANITARY WORK AND PROGRESS.

MILK SUPPLY AND DAIRIES. During the year 9 samples of ~~new~~ milk of new milk were taken and two of skim milk for analysis purposes. All were found genuine and free from contamination. The Dairy question in Launceston is a difficult one. There are no what can be called real model dairies, but what dairies there are are on the whole kept in a satisfactory manner. The question of dairies is so closely connected with the housing question that until the latter is improved it is practically impossible to deal with the former. A model dairy should be used entirely for dealing with dairy produce and dairy produce only such as milk, butter, cream etc but in most dairies in this town owing to the houses having no provision for the storage of food most of the dairies are used as larders as well and instead of only dealing with dairy produce contain general larder produce and even groceries which of course should not be. The Dairy question is an exceedingly important one viewing the relation played by the supply of milk in the causation of tuberculosis and other diseases. In an old town like Launceston I do not think you will ever get what are absolute model dairies.

FOOD PROTECTION. In my last annual report I made some remarks



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on food protection, and with summer coming on I would exhort all tradespeople and all householders to do their utmost to keep down the fly nuisance which is the causation of so much disease. Let every household have its fly-killer and keep all meat under gauze covers, cover over milk jugs with muslin. To shopkeepers especially confectioners with so much sugary food and butchers, keep all goods unexposed to the savages of flies, and to all householders generally I say keep your sinks clean and put down some sort of disinfectant two or three times a week. Remember that flies are our worst enemies and the breeders and spreaders of many serious diseases such as Tuberculosis, Typhoid Fever, severe diarrhoea and many other diseases which cause death.

REMOVAL OF HOUSEHOLD REFUSE AND SCAVENGING.

I am afraid I must once again make another reference to the old Hardy Annual. "The Dust bin". Although I have frequently brought to your notice the unsatisfactory way in which household refuse is deposited outside houses I am afraid there has been very little improvement in the provision of sanitary covered dust bins. Surely it is not asking much to provide a small covered in bin. The variety of utensils deposited outside houses on scavenging day is amazing but amusing.

With regard to scavenging as you know I have more than once advocated a more up to date method of removing house refuse but this has been turned down on a score of expense but whether you go in for a quicker method of removing household refuse than the antiquated one horse scavenging cart or not at any rate make that cart do its work in a sanitary manner. I have frequently seen the scavenging cart going through the centre of the town about two o'clock in the afternoon very overloaded heaped right up no attempt made to shut the flanges which are supposed to keep the refuse from escaping and the wind blowing the refuse and bits of paper which are left behind all over the street and this at a time when shops are open and meat and other food stuffs are exposed to view I need hardly say this would not gladden the heart of any Medical Officer of Health. I say again I do not consider 2 o'clock in the afternoon the proper time to scavenge a town the size of Launceston. I maintain that in an up to date town and I take it we in Launceston consider our town up to date that more modern and quicker means of removing household refuse should be in vogue. I am aware that to scavenge Launceston as it should be scavenged more money would have to be spent on sanitation but money spent on sanitation is money well spent. Good sanitation means better health and better health means less sickness and less sickness means less money spent on sick pay which yearly laps up ~~many~~ millions of state money.

HOUSING.

I shall open my remarks on Housing by saying that there is a very great demand still for suitable houses at a tangible rent for working men with families and young married couples. There are to my personal knowledge in Launceston to day young married couples living in lodgings or living with the parents who are clamouring for suitable dwellinghouses. I know of others also only awaiting marriage for want of house accommodation. Many excellent houses have been erected in Launceston during the past twelve months both of the villa type and Terrace type. This is undoubtedly all for the good of the town good for trade and value, the status of the town as a residential borough. Your Council have also during the past few years erected a considerable number of cottages which were intended to be workmen's dwellings. But

we cannot get away from the fact that these new houses have not answered the purpose for which they were originally intended. The idea when these houses were erected was to enable the people who are living in the congested and insanitary houses in the town to "move up" so to speak and thus relieve the congestion. Why have they not done so? For the simple reason they are unable to face the rental demanded. I am aware that these houses were built at a time when the cost of material and labour was extremely high and that it is impossible to let them at a low rental but there the fact remains and if you go through the list of the present occupants of the houses a lot of the newly built houses you will I think agree with me that some are occupied by a class of people for whom they were not intended so the fact remains that up to the present we are not really very much better off in relieving the pressure in the more congested parts of the town. What we want is about 40-50 houses at a tangible rent which the man with labourers wages can face and the problem is to know how to get them. It is unreasonable to suppose a working man earning the average wages can pay 7/6 or 8/6 per week rent especially if he has a long family and perhaps rates on top of that and when we have got these houses we must be very careful that we get and keep to the class of people for whom they are expressly intended. The demand of this type of house is proved by the fact that whenever a cottage becomes vacant there is a rush for the same from about 40 applicants. And now a few remarks about the more seamy side of the Housing Problem. During the year many house inspections were made by the Sanitary Inspector and myself and I am glad to be able to report at last after many years of waiting that two of those horribly insanitary cottages in Madford Lane have been closed for human habitation. Other house inspections were made during the year at Angel Hill, Northgate Street and houses in St Thomas Road and Tower Street. Acting on an adverse report which I made to your Council of insanitary condition and living in Angel Hill you appointed a special Committee to visit and report and to meet the landlords of some of these properties to see if anything could be done to make ~~them~~ some of these dwellings anything like habitable. Unfortunately for this important move only one member of the appointed deputation made an appearance namely Mr Councillor Kitterow and he and the Sanitary Inspector and myself met the landlord. The outcome of this visit was the landlord did not consider the properties worth spending money on to make it habitable and one or two houses are not to be re-let. [But other houses which were found unsatisfactory have not been dealt with and remain in the same state nothing having been done. I do not propose to again go into the details of these, damp walls lack of lavatory and food accommodation etc because you must be as weary of hearing these facts from me as I am of bringing them to your notice but the tenants of these houses is the class of tenants I particularly want to see "moved up" into the Council new cottages.] We were worried a lot throughout the year by the disgraceful conditions of living that were going on in a dwelling house in St Thomas Road which is sub-let into several tenements -- a practice which personally I consider most undesirable and nearly always leads to overcrowding. Here overcrowding and persons living in a verminous state was going on and had been for several years as you all knew the family increasing yearly. Conditions of living got so bad I received a very strong protest from the Secretary of the Welfare Centre complaining of the verminous state the nurses got into when they left the building and I personally experienced the same thing. However I am glad to be able to report that since the new year the tenement which I have mentioned has been rid of the

tenant and the tenement cleansed fumigated . These people really ought to have been removed long ago . Families must not be allowed to live in an overcrowded and verminous state for the pretty reason that there is a house shortage . Every effort must now be made to prevent this house which is sub-let into tenements from reverting to its former horribly unsanitary state. Another condemned property in Harvey's Lane was practically re-built to make it habitable and is now fit for a widow or old age pensioner but not for a family. In my remarks on Housing to a close there is one more property which it is my duty to bring to your notice. I refer to that old property at Northgate Street above the Picture Palace which you have known many years ago. After much difficulty the tenants moved into one of the Council's new cottages and property closed. This was about 2 years ago. The property was then unsanitary dilapidated and derelict with hardly any roof and must be considerably worse now after all this time. The property ought to be dealt with at once with view to demolition to give open space or to provide site for new workmens cottages. Under the new Regulations of the Public Health Act upon which the Town Clerk will give you legal advice you have great power to deal with properties of this type with view to demolition and it is up to you as a Council to make use of that authority.

OTHER INSPECTIONS.

During the year I have made inspections under the Factory & Workshops Act, Bakehouses, Slaughter houses-Elementary Schools-Public Conveniences--and the Sanitary arrangements at the Railway have been inspected from time to time.

MORTUARY. The Public Mortuary was made use of once during the year and is in a satisfactory condition.

I have the honor to be, Mr Mayor & Gentlemen,

Yr obedient Servant,

Arthur Budd

Medical Officer of Health.

